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# STALIN AND THE NEW PROGRAM FOR THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF INDONESIA

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with introduction by Ruth T. McVey

## Introduction

Historians of political events can dream of that suddenly opened archive, that body of correspondence found mouldering in an attic, those diaries that cast a whole new (and preferably scandalous) light on what really happened. Very occasionally, such fantasies come true. The end of the Cold War and the collapse of the Soviet Union provided a unique opportunity for scholars who were determined, knowledgeable, and sufficiently well-connected to open some of the archival boxes that no one had imagined would ever be made public. One of these scholars was Larisa Efimova of the Moscow State Institute of International Relations, who has had a longstanding interest in the history of Indonesian Communism. In the freewheeling first decade after the demise of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), she was able to obtain access to the hitherto highly secret archives of the Soviet Communist Party (All-Union Communist Party [Bolshevik], or AUCP[B] in the text) for the period encompassing the Indonesian war of independence and the first years following it. In 2004, she published the results as *Stalin i Indoneziya: Politika SSSR v otnoshenii Indonezii v 1945–1953 godakh: Nyeizvyyestniye Stranitsiy* (Stalin and Indonesia: Soviet Policy towards Indonesia, 1945–1953).<sup>1</sup> This most interesting work was reviewed extensively in this journal by

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<sup>1</sup> Larisa M. Efimova, *Stalin i Indoneziya: Politika SSSR v otnoshenii Indonezii v 1945–1953 godakh: Nyeizvyyestniye Stranitsiy* [Stalin and Indonesia: Soviet Policy towards Indonesia, 1945–1953] (Moscow: Moscow State Institute of International Relations, 2004).

John Sidel ("From Russia with Love?," *Indonesia* 84 [October 2007]: 161–72), and I would strongly recommend that readers refer to his discussion for background and context.

Efimova also published some of her findings in English as separate articles (for references, see the main text). The essay presented here draws on the final section of her book, dealing with the early years following the Indonesian revolution and the reshaping of the Indonesian Communist Party (Partai Komunis Indonesia, PKI) under D. N. Aidit. As the title of the Russian work suggests, her attention was focussed throughout on the role played by Stalin, both because of his then enormous stature in the Soviet Union and the international communist movement, and because of the considerable amount of material indicating his interest in Indonesian communism. The major questions addressed concern the extent of Soviet contact with the Indonesian communist movement, and Soviet influence on the formulation of the new PKI program promulgated at the fifth party congress in March 1954.

The most striking revelation is certainly the report of meetings and correspondence between Stalin and Aidit. We can well imagine that Aidit, who was not yet thirty and not completely secure in his leadership of the Indonesian Communist Party, was greatly impressed by the attention paid him by world communism's unparalleled chief, and that he used this to bolster his position in internal PKI debates.<sup>2</sup> Stalin's idea of the proper strategy for the PKI did not, in fact, involve a transformation of Aidit's policy following this contact, since Aidit's ideological approach had had its origins in the "New Road" (Jalan Baru) program, which the exiled PKI leader Musso had brought back from Moscow to the revolutionary Republic in 1948. The "New Road" was itself born of the Soviets' "two-camp" doctrine, proclaimed in 1947 as one of the opening ideological shots in the Cold War. Envisioning a world divided into socialist and capitalist/imperialist camps, this doctrine declared that communist parties were natural leaders of the anticolonial struggle; indeed, it was their duty to insist on this leadership.

Such self-assertiveness was in contrast to the strategy that had been recommended since the 1930s by the Comintern in its struggle against fascism. Then it had been recommended that communist cadres hide their ideological light under the bushel of "popular fronts" or other broad movements, which they sought to control from within. Musso had pushed his insistence on the PKI's centrality to disastrous lengths, culminating in armed confrontation with the revolutionary Republic's leadership in the Madiun Affair of September 1948. Quite likely his aggression went beyond what Stalin had envisioned, since, as Efimova points out, the Soviet leader was actually quite conservative in his expectations of what communism in pre-industrial countries could accomplish. Moreover, Stalin's desire for communist dominance was tempered by pragmatic considerations of driving a wedge between Western countries and their former colonial possessions. But to Aidit and other younger-generation leaders of the

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<sup>2</sup> It is worth noting, however, that Aidit did not refer publicly to discussions with Stalin in support of his strategy, but rather (as was also the case at the 1954 PKI party congress) to the inspiration he had received from Marxism-Leninism, Musso's "New Road," and the "Thought" of Mao Zedong. Reliance on this last ideological prop was not unusual for the time, for China was then acknowledged by the Soviets as the model for Asian Communism. Gradually, the New Road ceased to be referred to in PKI rhetoric except historically, and Mao's example was replaced by the "Thought" of Aidit and the Indonesianization of Marxism-Leninism.

PKI, the idea of Communist dominance in a continuing Indonesian revolution was immensely appealing. When they assumed power in the party at the beginning of 1951, they did so in the name of resuming the journey along the New Road.

The initial post-Madiun leadership of the PKI had been in the hands of surviving older leaders, most prominently Tan Ling Djie, who had urged a return to the strategy of working to control popular organizations from within, rather than asserting the communist party's claims for leadership openly. This approach was now denounced as the defeatist line of Tan Ling Djie-ism.<sup>3</sup> The question, of course, was how far the party's new chiefs could assert the PKI's primacy without inviting crushing reprisals from the Republic's governing elite. At first, they pushed a general, though legal, campaign (strikes, rallies, and so forth) against all those in power. Very likely, what caused them to re-think this confrontational pose was less Stalin than Sukiman, for in August 1951 that conservative Indonesian prime minister tired of the communists' pinpricks and swatted the party and union leadership with a wave of arrests. It was a salutary warning: Aidit and his associates concluded that they could not take on the Indonesian political establishment as a whole but must seek protection from allies who were sufficiently powerful that they could block a concerted anti-communist move. They must make themselves invaluable to those allies, without at the same time renouncing their claims to be the ultimate focus of a continuing Indonesian revolution. This new interpretation was embraced at the October 1953 session of the PKI central committee and confirmed at the fifth party congress in March 1954. It led to the alliance with left nationalism and Sukarno, which would eventually bring the PKI a great popular presence and a fatal vulnerability.

The material presented in this essay is certainly interesting for those attempting to trace Indonesian events of that period, but it is also important for its evocation of another age and world of thought, that of Marxism–Leninism and the world Communist movement. It may now seem somewhat quaint: a nineteenth- and twentieth-century “scientific” version of the recurring idea that there is a Right Formula for perfecting the world, a revelation that an inspired leadership must explain to and impose on the masses. The intra-party debates on the correct interpretation and application of the Formula to a given situation may appear to the outsider as mere ritual, or as a tool in the internal struggle for power, and, indeed, they often were; but at the same time, the idea of a Right formula and its correct interpretation reflected a real way of perceiving things. Moreover, this mode of perception was not limited to the communists, as such—it heavily influenced the development of Indonesian radical nationalist thought in the twentieth century. Consequently, we need to take this angle of vision into account when we address the political debates and strategies of that period. (And it is not entirely without relevance to the present day, though possession of the Right Formula appears to have passed to radical religious movements.)

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<sup>3</sup> Readers seeking further information on these changes might be interested in referring, in addition to the works by Hindley and Van der Kroef cited in the text, to my “Indonesian Communism and China,” in *China in Crisis*, ed. Tang Tsou, vol. 2 (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1968), pp. 357–94. For the period of the revolution, my *The Soviet View of the Indonesian Revolution* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell Modern Indonesia Project, 1957), may be of some use; however, it is based exclusively on open sources.

Archives have their own way of representing the world, of course. They are almost always official (whatever the officialdom is); even if their material is not restricted to official reports, it has been included according to criteria thought valid for official purposes. This, of course, gives them a certain authority, but also a definite bias and a kind of tunnel vision. In recompense, they have the immense advantage that they are of their time. Memories fade and memoirs rewrite the past, but unless archives have been drastically purged, they provide us with, at least, a view of events as they were seen by one contemporary institutional actor. And, given that it was never envisioned that such records as those of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union would ever be open to the general public, we may perhaps be more confident with this collection that they were kept reasonably intact. Questions of interpretation aside, these documents confront us with unexpected information and odd lacunae. How, at this stage, can we deal with the questions they raise? Perhaps the best hope is that more archival material will become available and perused. In addition to wishing that other collections in the ex-Soviet Union (the foreign ministry's, for example) might be made accessible, we might hope that someday Chinese scholars will be able to explore their country's early postrevolutionary foreign relations through their official archives. Or that historians may gain access to Czechoslovak Communist and government archives, for Prague was an important center for Indonesian contact with the Soviet world both during the revolution and after the Indonesian coup of 1965. A slender hope, perhaps; the opening-up that enabled Efimova to research the Soviet party archives has gradually been reversed. Nonetheless, the fact that it did occur and produced such significant material should encourage scholars to follow Efimova in taking prompt advantage of such cracks in the armor of officialdom as may open in the future.

— Ruth T. McVey

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### **Stalin and the New Program for the Communist Party of Indonesia<sup>4</sup>**

For more than two generations, historians have been asking whether Moscow participated in the organizational and ideological revival of the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI) in 1951–53. Some authors believe that the Indonesian communists defined the new party strategy and tactics independently from either Moscow or Beijing. Scholars have been eager to know whether Moscow participated directly in the promulgation of the new PKI line. This article is based on newly released documents from the Archive of Joseph V. Stalin, not published yet in English. The documents show that Stalin played an active and personal role in the process of discussing and refining a new program for the PKI. The main ideas Stalin expressed during his discussions with the Indonesian communists were incorporated into the new PKI program adopted in 1954, as well as in articles and speeches of PKI General Secretary Dipa Nusantara Aidit.

<sup>4</sup> This is an essay based on chapters 8 and 9 of a Russian-language version of my book, *Stalin i Indonyeziya: Politika SSSR v otnoshenii Indonyezii v 1945–1953 godakh: Nyeizvjestniye Stranitsiy. Moskva, 2004.*

The present work is based on materials and documents from the Archives of the Foreign Relations Department of the AUCP(B) Central Committee (CC). These documents and materials are kept at the Russian State Archive of Social and Political History (RGASPI, Rossiyskiy Gosudarstvenniy Arkhiv Sozialno-Politicheskoy Istorii).

The archival documents concerning Indonesia, available to the researcher, can be divided into four groups. The first group includes documents and materials of internal correspondence of the Foreign Relations Department. Mostly these are notes of officials of the Southeast Asian sector directed to higher party bureaucrats in the same department. This group of documents permits us to follow the process leading to the determination and formulation of the AUCP(B) CC position concerning the situation in Indonesia and its communist movement.

The second group comprises information materials, including some of the documents prepared by PKI leader Musso, as well as his letters to the AUCP(B) CC, written in the last period of his stay in Moscow and during his long return journey from the USSR to Indonesia. This group of archival documents gives a clear idea about Musso's views on the main problems and tasks of the Indonesian communist movement, as well as his attitude to the positions Soviet, Chinese, and Dutch communists had adopted regarding the Indonesian question.

The third group consists of documents connected with the Communist Party of the Netherlands (Communistische Partij Nederland, CPN). These are information materials prepared by the Foreign Relations Department of AUCP(B) CC, letters of the CPN leader Paul de Groot to Indonesian communists and to the AUCP(B) CC, and de Groot's report of his meeting and conversation with AUCP(B) CC Secretary A. A. Suslov, who was in charge of the AUCP(B) foreign affairs. The last portion of the archival documents in this group permits us to comprehend more accurately many points connected with interrelations among the three communist parties—the PKI, CPN, and AUCP(B).

The fourth group of the documents discovered in the recently opened archives are from a special Fond of Joseph Stalin, which is a part of the Russian State Archive of Social and Political History.

All the documents cited in this article were put into scientific circulation for the first time through the publication of my book, *Stalin i Indonyeziya: Politika SSSR v otnoshenii Indonyezii v 1945–1953 godakh: Nyeizvyestniye Stranitsiy*. It should be stressed that the archival documents available to the researcher are rather unconnected, and divided from each other chronologically. They do not give a complete and integral picture of the processes and events that were actually taking place at the time.

As a result of the participation by a number of PKI members in the anti-government rebellion of 1948, known as the Madiun Affair, the party was crushed, but officially not banned. The surviving leaders and members attempted to maintain what was left of the party organization.

Western scholars have noted that, at the end of the 1940s and the beginning of the 1950s, Indonesian communist leaders were trying not only to maintain and restore the PKI structure following the Madiun disaster, but also to work out a new program of action in drastically changed conditions. In this connection, one of the most intriguing

and important questions for researchers was whether Moscow participated in the organizational and ideological revival of the Communist Party in Indonesia. But not a single scholar could say anything definite about the problem because documentary and even oral information was lacking.

Some authors believed that Moscow showed an apparent lack of interest in the PKI for some years after the Madiun rebellion. Donald Hindley wrote:

It is probable that after the fiasco of Madiun, Moscow wrote off the Indonesian Communists as a lost cause. That is, Moscow considered the distant PKI no longer worthy of attention. Only after 1954, when the success of the Aidit leadership's version of the national united front had become amply apparent, did the interest of Moscow focus anew on PKI.<sup>5</sup>

Hindley emphasized that Moscow's previous interference into PKI affairs was disastrous for the party, and that the Indonesian communists defined the new party strategy and tactics independently from either Moscow or Beijing. Later researchers also supported the theory that Moscow had lost interest in the Indonesian communist party.<sup>6</sup> Other authors were eager to know the answer to the intriguing question of whether Moscow guided the PKI as it developed its new approach: "It is interesting to speculate whether Moscow participated directly in the promulgation of the new line."<sup>7</sup>

Documents discovered in the recently opened Archive of Joseph V. Stalin clearly and definitely answer this question in the affirmative. The documents completely refute the contentions of Western scholars, cited above, that Moscow lost interest in the Indonesian communists. The documents testify that Moscow, and Stalin personally, never ceased to pay attention to the events in Indonesia and the destiny of Indonesian communism. Stalin personally took a most active and immediate part in the process of discussing and polishing a new program for the PKI, which was being formulated by Indonesian communists in cooperation with their Chinese comrades. Stalin read the documents thoroughly and reacted with a keen interest. He suggested his own formulations and amendments, explaining his views and approaches in detail without formally forcing them upon the PKI representatives who had submitted their plans for his review.

After the Madiun Affair, some Indonesian leaders went to China, and those who stayed in Indonesia apparently did not lose contact with the CCP (Chinese Communist Party). In cooperation with the CCP Central Committee, and some other Indonesian communists, a representative of a provisional Central Committee of the PKI named Kando (alias Muriono), who was sent to China, had worked out program proposals for the PKI CC and compiled them in a document dated October 6, 1950. The document was sent to Stalin by CCP CC Secretary Liu Shaoqi, who requested Stalin's opinion. This correspondence signified that both Chinese and Indonesian communists needed approval and support from the AUCP(B)—and, most importantly, from Stalin. The

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<sup>5</sup> Donald Hindley, *The Communist Party of Indonesia, 1951–1963* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1966), pp. 30–31

<sup>6</sup> Olle Tornquist, *Dilemmas of the Third World Communism: The Destruction of the PKI in Indonesia* (London: Zed Books Ltd., 1984), p. 72.

<sup>7</sup> Arnold C. Brackman, *Indonesian Communism: A History* (New York, NY: Frederick A. Praeger, 1963), p. 172.

Chinese communists played the role of intermediary. This document from Muriono is now available to scholars for the first time.<sup>8</sup>

The document begins with these words: "After studying the experience of the victory of the Chinese revolution, we propose the following for the PKI CC." It continues with a short history of the PKI's successes and failures, from the uprising in 1926–27 to the Madiun Affair, which resulted in another crushing defeat for the party. The document stresses the complicated situation faced by the communist party in Indonesia, where power lay in the hands of a reactionary puppet government led by American and Dutch imperialists, and where the future was supposedly threatened by an imperialistic United States that aspired to turn Indonesia into its own colony.

The document points out that, inside the country, feudal forces remained unchanged. During the revolutionary war, a group of feudal–comprador capitalists had been assembled, headed by the Sukarno–Hatta clique, which achieved domination by leaning on feudal landlords and establishing contact with imperialists. The authors of this work considered the Republic of Indonesia's independence to be a mere facade, screening domination by imperialist Western powers. Muriono wrote:

The basic contradictions that caused the rise of the national revolution in Indonesia have not only remained unsolved, but have even become sharper and deeper. This creates the inevitability of a new revolutionary ascendance of the national revolution in Indonesia, and, taking into consideration the international situation, especially ... the victories of the national–liberation movement in the East, this ascendance is not too far away.

The main tasks of the Communist Party and all patriotic political parties and revolutionary organizations in Indonesia at the present time consist in incessantly unmasking, before all peoples of Indonesia, the false and deceptive character of the Indonesian Republic's "independence"; unmasking the factual domination by the Dutch over the Indonesian peoples and of their oppression by Dutch, American, and British imperialists; exposing the Sukarno–Hatta clique and their government as servants and agents of imperialist domination and the suppression of the Indonesian people; raising the self-consciousness of all layers of the population; consolidating all patriots against imperialists and their agents; creating a broad, united national front; consistently struggling for the achievement of true independence for the Indonesian people and a genuine people's democracy; and building a sovereign, free, and united Indonesian Republic.

To fulfill these tasks, Muriono's plan proposed strategy and tactics for the PKI, as follows:

1. Based on the revolutionary experience of all colonial and semi-colonial countries, which is, at the same time, the experience of the Indonesian Revolution, an "armed revolution" against "an armed counterrevolution" is necessary for the definitive liquidation of the domination of Dutch, American, and British imperialists and their agents. This is the only way for the Indonesian

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<sup>8</sup> Russian State Archive of Social and Political History (RSASPH) fond (f.) 558 opis (o.) 11 delo (d.) 313 list (l.) 2–11.

people to achieve the goal of the revolution. It is necessary to take appropriate measures for the creation of an army that is strong and steadfast in the struggle for national liberation.

2. The Communist Party of Indonesia should create a united national front, based on the union of workers and peasants, led by the working class, and including all nationalities, petty bourgeoisie, national bourgeoisie, all patriotic parties and groupings, and patriotic elements of the country based on the platform of the following political demands:

- The expulsion from Indonesia of all Dutch, American, and British imperialists' forces and the implementation of full independence for Indonesia.
- The overthrow of the domination of the domestic reactionaries, who serve the imperialists, and their replacement with a democratic coalition government, which ensures national independence and freedom of the people.
- The liquidation of feudal privileges and the carrying out of land reform.
- The protection of national industry and of trade and the development of the people's economy.
- Improvement in the lives of workers, peasants, and all toilers.
- The granting to the people of freedom of speech, freedom of the press, and freedom to hold meetings, form unions, and hold beliefs.
- Equal rights.
- Equality of rights between men and women.
- An alliance with the USSR, China, and the states governed by a people's democracy; struggle against imperialists' intervention in Asia's affairs; opposition to turning Indonesia into the bridgehead for a war of imperialist aggression.<sup>9</sup>

These policy recommendations were followed by a proposal to reunite all party organizations and cadres and to complete the restructuring and expansion of the party, as decided in August 1948, before the Madiun Affair. The document stressed that it was necessary to study the lessons of defeat, and to use the moment for carrying out a systematic program of educational activity in the party, to improve the members' theoretical mastery of the basic dogmas of Marxism–Leninism, as well as their understanding of the experience of the Chinese revolution, in order to turn the PKI “into a united proletarian party that masters the weapon of Marxism–Leninism, well-knit by iron discipline.”

4. The revolution in Indonesia will be won only after a hard, prolonged, and serious struggle. This is why the PKI should master the highest principles of strategy, to lead the revolution to the end.

According to the Muriono document, the development of the armed struggle must be tightly connected with the interests of the masses. Regarding the military aspects of

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<sup>9</sup> Countries the communists considered to be governed by “people's democracies” are the countries of the socialist camp led by the USSR.

the struggle, it would be necessary to master the strategy and tactics of guerrilla war. As far as the political aspects were concerned, it would be necessary to master the policy of the united front, isolating the enemy as much as possible, and gradually strengthening guerrilla units and turning them into a regular people's liberation army.

In conclusion, the authors of the program asked the PKI CC to evaluate the proposals and "if the CC considers them executable or feasible, on the whole, with certain corrections, we ask the CC to take measures for their proper realization."

The contents and formulation of the document reflect the strong influence on its authors of both the Chinese revolutionary experience and the strategic and political thinking of CCP leaders. Many of the CCP's typical dogmas are conspicuously reflected in this report, including: that the PKI should orient itself toward a new armed struggle against "the domination of Dutch and American imperialists" and "their puppets in the person of Sukarno-Hatta clique"; that the party must focus its work primarily on the creation of guerrilla units among peasants and "red" liberated areas in the countryside; that the PKI should form a national-liberation army in order to lead the revolution to the end, as well as organize "a broad united national front with the participation of petty and national bourgeoisie and intelligentsia" for the struggle against both local reactionaries and American imperialism.

Stalin read the program worked out for the Indonesian communists very thoroughly, underlined some sections, and made many marginal notes. In Stalin's reactions, we can clearly see his attitude to the proposals of the Indonesian and Chinese leaders.

Stalin's first remark concerned the passage in which the document first mentions the main tasks of the PKI, focusing on the necessity to unmask the falsity of Indonesian independence. "And what about the agrarian question?" wrote Stalin, as there was not a word about this question included in the document. Further, Stalin marked the phrases concerned with the necessity of "the armed revolution against the armed counterrevolution" and the "creation of a strong and steadfast national-liberation army," and he commented: "From the wrong end." Next to the passage about the necessity of "the expulsion from Indonesia of all Dutch, American, and British imperialists' forces," Stalin added: "Nationalization of their property!" Concerning the proposal for "the overthrow of the domination of the domestic reactionaries, who serve the imperialists" and "their replacement with a democratic coalition government," Stalin exclaimed: "Wrong!" Stalin had the same reaction to the call for "an alliance with the USSR, China, and the states governed by the people's democracy."

The whole fragment concerning the mastery of Marxist-Leninist theory and the practice of the Chinese revolution was simply crossed out by Stalin, who deemed it useless and irrelevant in such a serious document. Stalin agreed that "the revolution in Indonesia will be won only after hard, prolonged, and serious struggle," remarking: "This is so." The PKI's intentions remained unclear to him. Next to the words "to lead the revolution to the end," he wrote a question: "What does it mean?" He stressed the importance of mastering methods of illegal work, and especially approved of the call to take advantage of legal "parliamentary activity in all instances," penciling the exclamation: "This is right!"

Stalin did not support the transfer of lessons learned from the Chinese revolutionary experience into Indonesia; he rejected the suggestions advocating a new wave of armed struggle by the Indonesian communists. He approved only workable, practical proposals for PKI activity among the masses, as well as in legal organizations, and especially pointed out the importance of the agrarian question for Indonesian communists.

All of these remarks, in one way or other, were reflected later in Stalin's comments on the draft program for the Indonesian communists that was presented to him. Nevertheless, Stalin decided that he could not express his opinion on the document outright, because he considered himself to be insufficiently knowledgeable about the economic situation in Indonesia at that time, and judged that this lack of knowledge would make it difficult for him to evaluate the draft program properly.

Only after studying materials concerning the economy and social structure of Indonesia (these papers have been marked with a number of Stalin's comments and notes, especially on the agrarian questions), did Stalin reply. In January 1951, writing in his own hand, Stalin dispatched his comments on the draft program for the PKI CC dated October 6, 1950.

Stalin's message was as follows:

We inform you about our comments to the draft program dated October 6, 1950.

Our general impression is that, despite the purely agrarian nature of Indonesia, nevertheless the industry there is better developed than in some other colonial countries.

1. The main task of PKI in the near future is not "the creation of the broadest national front" against the imperialists for "winning real independence" for Indonesia, but the liquidation of feudal property of the land and the transformation of the land into the property of the peasants ...

2. The communist party's second task consists of the organization of a united national front to carry out the struggle for Indonesia's full independence from Dutch imperialism. This front should be organized so that its spear is primarily directed not against all foreign imperialists, but only against Dutch imperialists. The aim of this front is the banishment of Dutch imperialists with their military forces, nationalization of their property, rupture with the Netherlands and the declaration of Indonesia's full independence ...

3. The rest of the PKI's tasks, as outlined in the document, did not elicit remarks.

4. Proceeding to tactical questions, the document suggests that the way of "the armed revolution"—that is, a guerrilla war in the countryside—is the only way that can lead to victory. Certainly, the Chinese experience shows that the method of guerrilla war, with the creation of liberated guerrilla-controlled areas and the organization in those areas of a national-liberation army, should be recognized as an expedient method for such a backward country as Indonesia. But the problem is that, in Indonesian conditions, the methods used in China can be applied only with substantial modification.

First, the successful use of guerrilla war methods is predicated on the existence of a large country that has a large number of forests and mountainous areas located far away from railways and cities. Indonesia possesses these conditions in limited measure.

Second, even if the communists captured a liberated guerrilla area and established a national-liberation army there, nevertheless the area would represent only an island in the state. This island could easily be encircled by the enemy, because it has no solid rear support. The Chinese communists found a solid rear support in Manchuria, leaning against the friendly Soviet state. So the enemy lost the opportunity to encircle them. Indonesia represents a group of islands encircled with seas, and Indonesian comrades could not lean anywhere.

Thus the specific conditions of Indonesia limit the Indonesians' use of the guerrilla war method, the method of "the armed revolution." ...

Where is a way out? The way out is in completing the method of guerrilla war with the method of revolutionary activity by the working class in cities and industrial centers, with the method of all-out economic and political strikes, which would paralyze the reactionary government's activity and be aimed at supporting the guerrilla war in the countryside. The way out consists in the combination of these two methods ...

Because of that, it is absolutely impossible to underestimate the importance of political and organizational work among the working class. More than this, it is absolutely necessary in every possible way to win over the majority of the working class, remembering that party activity among the workers is no less important than activity among the peasantry and guerrillas.

5. The main sin of PKI leaders until now was that they were prisoners of the "leftist phrase." Without a deep and thorough analysis of the situation, they tried in one stroke to solve all problems: to liquidate feudalism, to break with the Netherlands, and to crush all imperialists ... In fact, if they followed such strategies, they would end up uniting all actual and potential enemies against themselves, isolating themselves, and weakening their own party to the last degree. Such is the usual, though sad, harvest of leftist declamations. It seems to me that the spirit of leftism continues to live among communists in Indonesia. In order to push this evil spirit out of the party, it is necessary to turn party activists sharply in the direction of practical, molecular "dirty" work concerning the question of the everyday needs of workers, peasants, working intelligentsia. Only there, through this work, can they rally the broad masses of toilers around the party ...

Certainly, this will be work without luster and chic, without alluring declamations. But now, under the present conditions in Indonesia, it is the most productive work ... <sup>10</sup>

Thus, from Stalin's response, we can see that he did not support the blind copying of the Chinese model by Indonesian communists. He recommended that the

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<sup>10</sup> RSASPH f. 558 o. 11 d. 313 l. 57-61.

Indonesian communists adapt their actions to fit the concrete social and economic, as well as political and even geographic, conditions of the country. In fact, Stalin was opposed to the proposal that the Indonesian communists initiate a new wave of the armed struggle, calling on them, first of all, to use such legal methods as strikes and efforts encouraging peasants to demand land. For an agrarian country like Indonesia, he especially stressed the importance of intensifying the peasants' movement to claim land, and advised making the agrarian program the first priority in the party's plans.

To summarize, Stalin called on the PKI to focus on practical work concerning the everyday needs and interests of workers, peasants, and the working intelligentsia. He recommended that the PKI should not include on its agenda for the near future any seizure of power by military means, which he judged to be a difficult and fruitless task, especially given the country's geography.

Stalin's remarks were sent to the PKI via Chinese communists, but these intermediaries could not pass Stalin's message to the PKI immediately.

In the first week of January 1951, the central leadership of the PKI, which had been formed after the Madiun Affair, was reshuffled. Former leaders were replaced by representatives of the new generation of communists headed by Dipa Nusantara Aidit, who became first secretary. He immediately began to restore the united party that had been planned and implemented by its first leader, Musso, who had been killed during the Madiun Affair. Simultaneously, Aidit started working out new strategies and tactics for Indonesian communists. Aidit gradually established contacts with Chinese comrades. Only after these contacts were set up could Chinese leaders pass Stalin's recommendations to the new PKI CC Politburo. As a result, Stalin's comments reached the Indonesian communists long after he made them.

Western scholars have argued that the new Indonesian leaders, Aidit and his associates, based their ideas exclusively on Marxism–Leninism (not on Stalinism or Maoism), and that Aidit worked out his strategy and tactics independently, without Moscow's participation. Therefore, according to these historians, the new program of Indonesian communists was free of the influence of "Stalin's dogmas."

Donald Hindley writes:

That the definition of the national united front strategy was effected independently by the Aidit leadership is strongly suggested by ... the apparent lack of interest in the PKI shown by Moscow for some years after the Madiun rebellion ...<sup>11</sup>

Justus Van der Kroef states:

... the years from 1948 to 1952 ... gave way to a new "Leninist" direction in the party under D. N. Aidit ... It is only in this last period that the PKI emerges as a truly Leninist party with a developed organization and revolutionary theory.<sup>12</sup>

These statements are echoed by later authors:

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<sup>11</sup> Hindley, *The Communist Party of Indonesia, 1951–1963*, p. 31

<sup>12</sup> Justus M. Van Der Kroef, *The Communist Party of Indonesia: Its History, Program, and Tactics* (Vancouver: Publication Centre, University of British Columbia, 1965), p. 4.

This drastic change of course was worked out and began to be put in practice late in 1951, and was adopted at the party congress in 1954. Stalin's postwar policies had, indeed, begun to wear thin by the time of the party congress in Moscow in 1952, but the base of the PKI's new policy was primarily to be found in its own analysis of the situation in Indonesia. Even internationally, the party was a pioneer. It was not until 1956 that Moscow openly adopted the policies which the PKI had already worked out in detail and had been practicing for several years.<sup>13</sup>

Documents discovered in the recently opened Archive of Joseph Stalin refute the contentions of these scholars. The archival documents testify that Stalin personally played a very active and direct role in the process by which Aidit composed new program documents for the PKI. Stalin met Aidit and other representatives of the PKI in Moscow, had long conversations with them, and exchanged protracted letters with them up to the final weeks before his death. So we have ample ground to argue that not only Marxism–Leninism and the Chinese model of revolutionary struggle, but also Stalin's own ideas and views, had profound impact on the PKI program documents adopted during the first years when the new generation of young Indonesian communists, headed by Aidit, took over leadership of the PKI, as well as on the views and positions assumed by Aidit himself.

On April 9, 1951, the new leadership adopted the PKI General Program. It was the first variant of a new program worked out by Aidit and his associates—young members of the reshuffled PKI Central Committee. In the archives, we have found translations of this General Program from English into Russian.<sup>14</sup>

The program stated that “the PKI represents the vanguard and the highest form of class organization of the Indonesian working class” and that “at present, the PKI is carrying out the struggle for the establishment of a people's democratic system in Indonesia, the further aim being to build a socialist society as the first phase of communism.” The document pointed out that “all PKI activity is based on a combination of Marxist–Leninist theory with the practice of the Indonesian revolution—on comrade Musso's ideas set forth in the PKI CC resolution [“The New Road for the Republic of Indonesia” of August 27, 1948—L. E.], as well as on Mao Zedong's ideas.”

The document characterized Indonesia as a semi-feudal and semi-colonial country, and the driving forces of the revolution were said to include the working class, the peasantry, intellectuals, small-businessmen, the national bourgeoisie, and other elements suffering under imperialist pressure. The current stage of the revolution was defined as “a bourgeois–democratic revolution of a new type, a bourgeois–democratic revolution of the period of imperialism and proletarian revolutions all over the world.”

The program said that “the revolution in Indonesia is a people's revolution, a revolution of the broad masses of the people led by the proletariat, a revolution aimed against imperialism, feudalism, and the comprador bourgeoisie.”

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<sup>13</sup> Tornquist, *Dilemmas of Third World Communism*, p. 51.

<sup>14</sup> RSASPH f. 558 o. 11 d. 315 l. 22–26. The original documents that came into Stalin's hands would have been written, or translated, in English because the Indonesian language was practically unknown in Moscow at that time.

The document underlined the need for unification of all anti-feudal and anti-imperialist elements “for the liberation of the Indonesian people from imperialist and feudal pressure.” However, on a more cautionary note, it pointed out that the fulfillment of this task would take a long time and that the immediate tasks should consist of training party members and creating a united national front.

The program spoke casually of the peasantry’s role in the revolution: “Taking into consideration that Indonesia is an agrarian country, the party work in rural areas should be broadened and deepened.”

This PKI program worked out under Aidit’s leadership was comparatively more moderate, freer of revolutionary demagoguery and leftist deviations, and less oriented towards the experience of the Chinese revolution than were the program proposals put forward by Muriono, the PKI representative in Beijing, which were written in cooperation with the CCP and dated October 6, 1950. Common to both programs was a lack of attention to the peasantry and its role in the revolutionary struggle. Shortcomings pointed out by Stalin in his analysis of Muriono’s program were not completely overcome by Aidit’s version of the proposals. This can be explained by the fact that Indonesian communists received Stalin’s remarks and suggestions for revision concerning Muriono’s program proposals only in March 1952, more than fourteen months after Stalin composed them, and after a new PKI program had already been worked out under Aidit’s leadership, and so Aidit and his colleagues were not acquainted with Stalin’s criticism of the previous program as they framed their new version. In addition, young PKI leaders, led by Aidit, did not initially accept Stalin’s criticisms and did not agree with a number of his views concerning the situation in Indonesia and PKI strategy.<sup>15</sup>

Asmu and Subekti, PKI delegates to the nineteenth CPSU (Communist Party of the Soviet Union) congress in Moscow, presented to the AUCP(B) Central Committee on October 25, 1952 a report describing the situation in the PKI. In the report, they outlined the PKI CC’s perspective on the questions addressed in the AUCP(B) CC message of February 2, 1951, and asked the AUCP(B) CC to discuss these questions. A Russian translation of this report, with Stalin’s remarks penciled in the margins, is located in RGASPI.<sup>16</sup>

Indonesian communists believed that

the present situation gives us the right to hope that a revolutionary situation is again ripening in Indonesia ... We received the letter from AUCP(B) CC comrades and have already begun to undertake successful work in the light of directions given to us. However, up to now we still have a number of unresolved questions ... For instance, it is not clear to us whether the struggle against Dutch imperialism in Indonesia should be considered of immediate importance and why only an anti-feudal front should be created.

Notes on the documents show that Stalin paid special attention to the report prepared by the Indonesian leadership. This report contained an analysis of the political situation in Indonesia at the beginning of the 1950s, a description of political

<sup>15</sup> Ibid. I. 19–21.

<sup>16</sup> RGASPI f. 558, o. 11 d. 314 l. 7–35.

forces and the state's power, a summary of the foundations of PKI policy, and a list of the tasks outlined by the leadership, headed by Aidit. Stalin marked a number of points that he considered most important with his famous blue pencil.

First of all, he marked the paragraph stressing the necessity of struggle to secure the abrogation of unequal agreements with the Netherlands and the rejection of a Mutual Defense Agreement with the USA. Secondly, noting the authors' demand for nationalization of vital economic assets, Stalin wrote: "Without foreign enterprises?," as these enterprises were omitted from the Indonesians' demands concerning nationalization. To the phrase regarding the liquidation of large landholdings, Stalin added: "And transfer the land to the peasants." He was perplexed by the proposal to transfer "land for redemption" to Indonesian peasants.

Stalin carefully read the short annotation of the report, prepared by the AUCP(B) CC department of foreign relations. He made a number of notes concerning PKI strategy and tactics, as well as notes responding to the party's demands. Many of the clauses in the PKI document provoked Stalin into writing skeptical or ironic remarks. Thus, for instance, concerning the PKI's demand for the withdrawal of all foreign troops from Indonesia and the whole of Asia, and for a halt to the remilitarization of Germany and Japan, Stalin reacted: "Ha-ha!" The same remark concludes the whole annotation.<sup>17</sup>

In December 1952, Aidit and Njoto arrived in the USSR and took part in the work of the XIX Congress of the AUCP(B), in addition to attending the celebration of Stalin's seventieth birthday. On January 6, 1953, these Indonesian communists were received by Stalin. I have discovered no records of the ensuing conversation in the archives. However, the nature of the discussion of the problems concerning the theory and practice of the PKI leadership was reflected in the letters that Stalin and Aidit exchanged during the following days.

In his letter to Stalin of January 13, 1953, Aidit expressed his agreement with practically all of Stalin's major comments, and clarified the Indonesian communists' position on the most important issues concerned with the strategy and tactics for the revolutionary struggle, asking for Stalin's opinions and his recommendations on strategy.<sup>18</sup>

Concerning the agrarian program ... We consider correct the statement that if the PKI, at present, does not attribute greater importance to the peasant issue, it will once more suffer the same catastrophe that took place in 1926 and 1948.

As far as our slogan of "nationalization of land" is concerned, we have recently come to understand its incorrectness ... As You [*sic*] have explained, nationalization of the land is necessary in general, but it should not be a program demand [this phrase is underlined by Stalin] in Indonesia at the current stage ... We are now convinced that the most important issue is that peasants receive the

<sup>17</sup> RSASPH f. 558 o. 11 d. 315 l. 8-12.

<sup>18</sup> RSASPH f. 558 o. 11 d. 316 l. 2-6.

land as a result of the revolution. Thus, it will be absolutely correct to put forward the slogan "land to the peasants," meaning by this slogan that there will be confiscation of the land owned by foreigners, as well as by Indonesian landlords, without any compensation offered to these landowners. We shall explain to the peasants that our main task is liquidation of feudalism.

Stalin corrected the word "feudalism" with the words "feudal remnants."

Furthermore, Aidit wrote that the PKI agrarian program spoke about peasants' right to use the land, but that the party should speak about giving the land to the peasants, which they would then own as private property. The last words were underlined by Stalin.

Concluding the first paragraph of the letter, Aidit assured Stalin: "We would like to state that now there is no discrepancy between Your opinion set forth in the CPSU CC letter and our opinion concerning issues mentioned above." He added, "About the national front. You have pointed out that we should choose between joining with the peasantry and creating a national front without the peasants' participation." (Stalin's comments on the sentence: "I did not say that." The words "did not say" are underlined twice.) Aidit wrote, "We believe that the union with the peasantry should become our base because it would mean the union with the great majority of the people." Aidit then asked for Stalin's advice regarding the prospect of establishing a united front with other political parties. Aidit added, " ... on the issue of the nationalization program that would focus primarily on all vital industries owned by imperialists, as well as by traitors, that is the point of view approved by You, and now we agree with it."

The third paragraph of the letter addresses tactical issues: "Concerning tactics. We fully agree with Your opinion on the issue of the tactics we should adhere to in the present internal political situation in Indonesia ... This is in short our opinion on the main issued put forward by You during our first conversation." In conclusion, Aidit informed Stalin about documents the PKI was working on at the time.

Despite Aidit's assurances that the PKI agreed with most of Stalin's suggestions, the letter shows that the PKI was not going to reorient itself decisively away from the CCP towards the CPSU, and that the influence of the CCP on Indonesian communists remained substantial. Aidit wrote, "With the help of our comrades from the CCP CC, we are preparing the aforementioned draft documents, and then, after we finish our work on them, we shall present them for Your evaluation. We hope to know Your opinion and to receive Your critical observations on the above drafts. [The last sentence Stalin marked with +.] Grateful to You in advance, with comradely regards, Aidit."

Stalin replied to Aidit with a letter dated February 16, 1953, a mere two weeks before his death. The Archive of Joseph Stalin retained the original copy with Stalin's handwritten, penciled notes, and some typed draft versions corrected by Stalin. In this article, I am citing the latest official version of Stalin's reply to Aidit.<sup>19</sup>

1. The Peasant Question. It is a welcome fact that there are no longer any disagreements between us on the peasant question. But I think that there should

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<sup>19</sup> Ibid. I. 26-31

not only be no disagreements between us, but no misunderstanding at all on this question. I have in mind one passage in your letter, which says: "We shall make the work among the peasants, that is, the abolishment of feudalism, our main work." This sentence may give rise to misunderstanding, since people may think that in Indonesia there exists full, 100 percent, feudalism, which, of course, is incorrect. During our discussion, I already noted that there is not, and cannot be, 100 percent feudalism in Indonesia ... In drafting the program, the formula of the abolition of feudalism should be replaced by the formula of the abolition of the remnants of feudalism, to be more precise.

The question arises: what are these remnants of feudalism, what is their essence?

They are, in the first instance, the actually existing right of the big landlords to hold monopoly possession of the land cultivated by the peasants ... ("monopoly right" of the landlords to the land under feudalism).

They are, secondly, payment to the landlords of rent in kind, which constitutes [and claims] a considerable proportion of the peasant harvest, and which leads to the impoverishment of the majority of the peasants ("obligation of payment in kind" under feudalism).

They are, thirdly, the system of rents in the form of labor on the landlords' estates, carried out with the aid of primitive peasant equipment, which puts the majority of the peasants in the position of serfs ("corvée" under feudalism).

They are, finally, a dense network of debts, enmeshing the majority of the peasants, making them insolvent debtors, and putting them in the position of slaves in relation to the landowners ("debt slavery" under feudalism).

The consequences of all these remnants of feudalism are well known: technical backwardness of agriculture, impoverishment of the majority of the peasants, contraction of the internal market, impossibility of industrializing the country.

Hence, the immediate task of the Communists is to eliminate the remnants of feudalism, to develop the anti-feudal agrarian revolution, to transfer without compensation the landowners' land to the peasants as their private property.

The question arises: does not temporarily renouncing the nationalization of the land and the division of the landowners' land among the peasants as their private property mean renouncing socialist prospects in the development of agriculture? No, it does not.

In Russia, it was possible and necessary to proceed to the nationalization of the land by a direct route and not through the division of the landowners' lands, since favorable conditions for this existed there ...

Stalin noted that the situation was different in the Peoples' Democracies. Not only was it true that the favorable conditions found in Russia did not exist in these other countries, but even more dire, the principle that land should be owned as private property had become deeply rooted in the lives of the peasants in these countries. "Consequently, it was necessary in those countries to proceed to the nationalization of land, and to socialist prospects in the development of agriculture, not directly, but in a roundabout way—through the division of the landowners' lands." Stalin added that,

later, the peasants took the path of creating collective farms, that is, the path of socialist development.

The letter continued:

As regards nationalization of the land, it is being prepared and is beginning to be carried out in those countries [People's Democracies] in a rather peculiar way, namely, by promulgating a series of laws restricting the right to private ownership of land and making difficult, or even altogether prohibiting, the sale and purchase of land. This is the path towards nationalization of the land ...

It is this path that China is taking, too. I think that the same thing will happen in Indonesia after the victory of the agrarian revolution there.

2. The National Front. Of course, if the Communist Party is so weak that it is incapable of simultaneously organizing both an alliance of the workers and peasants and the creation of a national front, then it will have to choose between these two social undertakings and concentrate its forces on the organization of an alliance of the workers and peasants as the more important task. But such a contingency cannot be considered in any way desirable. It would be desirable, on the contrary, for the Party to gain the capacity to build simultaneously both the alliance of the workers and peasants and the National Front. In this connection, it should be borne in mind that the National Front is certainly essential and important for a successful struggle not only against internal reaction, but also against the foreign menace.

Hence my advice is: in organizing the alliance of the workers and peasants on the basis of a revolutionary agrarian program, you should take up at the same time the improvement and strengthening of the united National Front so that the Communist Party will acquire, in time, a leading position within this front.

3. Otherwise, your letter does not call for any comment.

With Communist greetings

J. Stalin

As is well known, Stalin died on March 5, 1953. Apparently, in the period of time that intervened between Stalin's final letter to Aidit and his death, no further meetings between the Russian leader and the PKI leaders were held and no more letters were exchanged.

In March 1954, the Fifth National Congress of the PKI took place. The Congress approved a new party program, which took account of a number of Stalin's observations, interpretations, and explanations.

First of all, the party program characterized Indonesia as a semi-feudal country. In earlier documents issued by Aidit and his associates, the notion "semi-feudal" was often interchanged with the notion "feudal." The lack of clarity and consistency in Aidit's understanding of this issue was noted by Donald Hindley. He writes:

The Aidit leadership's theory of the Indonesian revolution is based on the assumption that Indonesia is a semi-colonial, semi-feudal country. At first the Party leaders merely asserted this to be self-evident.

PKI at first did not elaborate on what was termed the semi-feudal nature of Indonesia. An early account of Indonesia's semi-colonial position was given by Aidit in May 1953.

Although the first agrarian program, drawn up under the Aidit leadership and issued on 10 November 1951, had referred to the "land ownership of a feudal and imperialist nature," a clear definition of what was meant by semi-feudalism was not given until July 1953. In that month, Aidit wrote a major article, "The Future of the Indonesian Peasant Movement," which marked the beginning of intensive Party work in the rural areas.

He stated that after capitalism had developed in Indonesia, complete feudalism no longer existed, but that "important and heavy remnants" remained. The most significant remnants he listed were:

- 1) the continued monopoly rights of the large landowners, with the result that the majority of peasants could not own land and were forced to rent land on the landowners' terms;
- 2) the payment of most of the crops as land rent in kind, so that the majority of peasants were kept in poverty;
- 3) the payment of land rent in the form of work on the landlords' land, "which places the majority of peasants" in the position of serfs;
- 4) the heavy debts of the majority of peasants, which placed them "in the position of slaves vis-à-vis the landowners."

In short, Aidit argued, "there is still feudal exploitation of the peasants."<sup>20</sup>

If we compare these analyses offered by Hindley and the further contents of Aidit's article, mentioned by D. Hindley, as noted earlier, with the text of Stalin's final letter to Aidit dated February 16, 1953, the influence of Stalin's arguments and formulations on subsequent PKI programs becomes quite clear.

Hindley stresses that "the PKI Program endorsed by the Fifth National Congress in March 1954 devoted its first section to a description of Indonesia as being semi-colonial and semi-feudal ... On the matter of feudal remnants in Indonesia, the program added nothing to Aidit's article of July 1953."<sup>21</sup>

Thus, we can conclude that the party program's definition of Indonesia as a semi-feudal country was composed by the Indonesian leadership as a result of the direct influence of Stalin, or, to borrow a phrase from certain Western scholars, under the direct impact of "Stalin's dogmas."

Stalin's recommendations, the result of his analysis of the first PKI program documents of October 6, 1950, were clearly adopted in the PKI Program of 1954, which identified the main targets of the Indonesian revolution as imperialism and feudalism.

Stalin's recommendations had influenced the formulation and refinement of the Indonesian communists' approach to the issue of the motivating forces behind the

<sup>20</sup> Hindley, *The Communist Party of Indonesia, 1951-1963*, pp. 32-33.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 33-34.

revolution and the proletariat's allies. Stalin repeatedly stressed the importance of the agrarian question for Indonesia. In his analysis of the PKI Program of October 6, 1950, he pointed out directly that the basis of a people's democracy in Indonesia could only be a strong alliance of workers and peasants. The Indonesian communists eventually agreed to this, as is evident in Aidit's letter to Stalin of January 13, 1953. As Hindley notes, "the Aidit leadership's increased awareness of the role of the peasantry in the revolution was shown in Aidit's declaration in July 1953 that the agrarian revolution is the essence of the people's democratic revolution in Indonesia."<sup>22</sup> Thus, Aidit actually repeated Stalin's words verbatim.

Stalin believed that the main PKI task, at the time, was the struggle against feudal patterns of property ownership in the countryside. Eventually, Aidit and his associates agreed to this. They declared landlords to be "the main enemies of the revolution."

One of the most important issues that arose in the discussions among Aidit and his associates with Stalin was the question regarding the development of a national front. As Hindley writes, from the very beginning Aidit, like Musso, believed that the creation of "one complete national united formation" or "a national united front" should be the principal task of the party's strategy. But Aidit gave no further details to clarify what the front would involve. Aidit was working on the issue during the years 1951 and 1952. Hindley points out that "the political experience of the Party in 1950 and 1951, plus the knowledge of Indonesian society, were used to determine the major tactics, form of struggle, and form of organization that have guided PKI down to the present [the year 1965—L. E.]."<sup>23</sup> The archival documents show Stalin's personal, important contribution to the formation of the Indonesian communists' point of view on the issue of the national front.

Stalin believed that the creation of a broad united national front to further the struggle for the complete independence of Indonesia should be carried out simultaneously with the creation of an anti-feudal front. Such a front ought to be based on a strong alliance of workers and peasants. It could include working intellectuals and the national bourgeoisie. The PKI should gradually take command of the front into its own hands.

Discussions on these issues with Stalin helped Indonesian communists refine and clarify their views on this question. On July 31, 1956, Aidit offered a detailed exposition of what the national united front policy meant in terms of the PKI's relations with non-communist political forces. This exposition was in full compliance with the Soviet leader's earlier recommendations.

Aidit repeated Stalin's words almost verbatim in section 4 of his work, "A Short History of the Communist Party of Indonesia" (1955), as well as in his "Indonesian Society and Indonesian Revolution" (1957), in section 5 of chapter 1 and section 2 of chapter 2.<sup>24</sup>

In conclusion, there is considerable evidence to suggest that the opinions, remarks, and recommendations (which cannot be characterized as "dogmatic") expressed by

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<sup>22</sup> Ibid. p. 41.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid. p. 48.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

Stalin had a considerable—and, on a number of issues, even a decisive—impact on the formulation of the PKI's program documents during the period of Aidit's leadership. Stalin's recommendations also influenced the broader strategy and tactics of Indonesian communists in the 1950s and 1960s. Thus, Aidit and his associates became genuine "Stalinists," but not according to the meaning of this label understood by Western scholars, who interpret Stalinism as synonymous with hard-line dogmatism, revolutionary extremism, and the blind following of the "Moscow line." Quite to the contrary, Stalin's directions aimed to encourage the Indonesians to adopt a more flexible, pragmatic course, take moderate positions, and use extreme caution, as the Russian leader advised gradual progress towards solving questions having to do with the revolution and the building of socialism.

Nevertheless, it should be noted that neither Aidit nor any other Indonesian communist leader ever openly acknowledged the influence of Stalin's ideas on their worldview. This disavowal was the result of the new situation in the Soviet Union, as well as in the international communist movement, after Stalin's death. The new state and party leadership in the Soviet Union reconsolidated under slogans that condemned the former leader and called for a struggle against Stalinism. Indonesian communist leaders, who were interested in receiving assistance from the USSR and the CPSU, did not want to contradict the new line in Soviet policy and ideology, and so kept to the spirit of the times.

In the documents available to researchers, this period is concluded with three telegrams of condolence sent from Indonesia on the occasion of Stalin's death. The first telegram from the Wilopo government was written in a discreet official style. The condolence message from President Sukarno was more personal and emotional. In the telegram from the PKI, the Indonesian communists expressed deep sorrow and promised to fulfill all the wishes of the beloved Soviet leader.<sup>25</sup> And this they truly did.

Stalin's thorough and attentive efforts to help work out strategy and tactics for the PKI, which began to revive early in 1950, raise questions about the reasons for Stalin's interest in the weak and disorderly Indonesian party. The available archival documents from the Stalin Fond do not give a definite answer to this question, which, if were answered, could explain the role and place of Indonesia and the PKI in Stalin's plans concerning Asia and the world revolution. A number of Western scholars have argued that, following the victory of the Chinese revolution, the CCP gradually became a rival of AUCP(B) in Asia. Given the evidence available in the archives, it is possible to suggest that Stalin might have wanted to help the PKI grow strong and influential so that it might develop as a kind of a counterbalance to the CCP in the Asian communist movement. But this theory is contradicted by the fact that Stalin regarded the PKI's request to him, which was sent via CCP representatives, as quite normal and consistent with his own declaration that it was China and the CCP that must play the leading role in the Asian communist movement. Stalin was of the opinion that this pattern was best, as the USSR was only partly an Asian country, and China was situated completely in Asia. This idea was elaborated by Stalin later in his conversation with Zhou Enlai.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Archive of Foreign Policy of the Russian Federation f. 91 o. 6 d. 1 papka 1 l. 1–3.

<sup>26</sup> A. M. Ledovskiy, "Stenogrammy peregovorov I. V. Stalina i Zhou Enlaia v avguste–sentyabre

So we can suggest that, since he had declared himself dedicated to the task of fomenting a world communist revolution, Stalin was eager to revive and strengthen as many communist parties as possible, and not only in Europe but in Asia, as well. He did his best and took all possible measures for achieving this goal. His interest and attention towards the PKI as a potential leader of the national liberation movement in Indonesia was consistent with the practical state policy formulated by the Southeast Asian Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the USSR, as follows: that the USSR must assist, in all possible ways, the Indonesian people in its national liberation struggle and struggle to prevent the restoration of the Dutch colonial regime, as well as the seizure of Indonesia by Americans in their pursuit of US expansionist policy in Southeast Asia.<sup>27</sup>

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1952 goda" [A. M. Ledovsky, *Minutes of Conversations between I. V. Stalin and Zhou Enlai in August–September 1952*], *Novaya i noveyshaya istoriya* 2 (1997): 83.

<sup>27</sup> Archive of Foreign Policy of the Russian Federation f. 091 o. 1 d. 1 papka 1 l. 6–8. See also L. M. Efimova, "Towards the Establishment of Diplomatic Relations between the USSR and the Republic of Indonesia," *Indonesia and the Malay World* 26, 76 (1998): 184–94; L. M. Efimova, "New Evidence on the Establishment of Soviet–Indonesian Diplomatic Relations (1949–1953)," *Indonesia and the Malay World* 29, 85 (2001): 215–33.

## АННОТАЦИЯ

Доклад о положении в Коммунистической Партии, представленный  
7.7.1952 в Сучекти 25 октября 1952 г.

В докладе говорится о сложившейся политической обстановке в стране, характеристика буржуазии под руководством правительства Индонезии, созданной в результате провозглашения Индонезии республикой в августе 1945 г., и выдвигаются основы политики коммунистической Партии, в том же духе задачи партии, назначенные коммунистическим руководством партии.

Кратко говорится о современной государственной политике в Индонезии, т.е. Асму и Сучекти заявляют, что "государственная политика в Индонезии в настоящее время находится в руках партии националистической индонезийской буржуазии, которая находится в союзе с империализмом. Однако слабость национальной буржуазии - агента империализма привела к тому, что государствомиссия партии и настоящий момент становится все более неготовым".

В докладе отмечается, что для сложившихся условий коммунистическая Партия Индонезии считает своей обязанностью направить народную массу на-стор сторону национальной буржуазии путем проведения точки мероприятий, которые затрагивают коренные интересы народных масс, а также путем теоретической раздельности: работы среди рабочего класса, крестьянства, армии, торговцев, мелко-наличных предпринимателей и других слоев индонезийского народа.

Различные основные положения стратегии и тактики партии, Асму и Сучекти приводят следующие указания коммунистической Партии:

"Индонезийская революция, на которой зиждется народно-демократическая революция, т.е. революция народных масс, требует дальнейшего продвижения в различных областях: в области империализма, феодализма и коммунистической буржуазии. Индонезийская революция имеет много сходств как внутри страны, так и за ее пределами. Поэтому единственность партии не

данном этапе является следующее: наши студенты - организовать и объединить рабочий класс, крестьянство, интеллигенцию, мелких предпринимателей, национальных предпринимателей и все антиимпериалистическое и антифеодалное элементы, а также все национальные меньшинства; на полевыми студиями - объединиться с международными пролетариями, со всем угнетенным народом, с нациями и национальностями, которые находятся под гнетом захватчиков на ринге с нами колониализма и которые борются за национальную независимость, народами демократии и мир во всем мире".

В отношении работы партии среди масс, в докладе говорится, что в работе среди рабочего класса и крестьянства партия руководствуется решениями, принятыми в бромфилде: "О задаче единого рабочего фронта" и "Агитация политика Коммунистической партии Индонезии". В отношении работы среди женщин, молодежи и интеллигенции комитет не имеет клики -либо определенных указаний.

Товарищи Асму и Субекта отмечают также, что комитет Индонезии сотрудничает с другими партиями, ставя своей задачей объединение широкого единого национального фронта. 31 марта 1961 г. по инициативе партии Социал Ислам Индонезия, компартия, Народной партии Индонезии, партии Мурба и Рабочей партии был созван "Создательский Фронт партий", в состав которого, помимо коммунистической партии, вошли Национальная народная партия, партия великой Индонезии (Шарифа), партия "Пермай", Национальная партия, Крестьянская партия Индонезии и Исламская партия "Перта" (всего 11 партий).

В программе Создательского органа сказано, что его задачей является: достичь просветления страны и независимого народа как с точки зрения материальной, так и духовной. В программе студентам широко обещано проводить деятельность самостоятельно и широкую работу полевую; ликвидировать социальное неравенство Нутного стол, способствовать любой национальной-союзительной борьбе угнетенных народов, терпеливо проводить в жизнь основные идеи и демократические основы народных масс; обеспечить правосудие вг. среду политик, ускорить

выполнениями земель, принадлежащих частным землевладельцам, про-  
вести срочнейшим образом сделки между кредитными; оказать под-  
держку национальным предпринимателям, которые действуют на под-  
ку народа; национализировать низковольтные предприятия, в  
течение времени ряд других прогрессивных мероприятий.

В Докладе т. Сталину и Судейки зачитывалось место отведено  
Вашему од отписывая компартия Нидерландия и выходящую предельно-  
стью, возмемаломому членом национальной партии Виллемс. И док-  
ладе говорилось, что Коммунистическая партия Нидерландия готова  
поддержать правительстве Виллемс, если оно обязуется отступить  
соглашение о взаимном обеспечении безопасности и другие мето-  
ды экспансии американскими империалистов и империалистов других  
государств, которые ущемляют суверенитет Индонезии; добиться  
включения Западного Китая (Новая Тибет) в состав Индонезий-  
ской республики и объявить Тонкинским атрессором в отношении  
Западного Китая; торговляровать демократические свободы и соу-  
ществование основных прав человека; немедленное проведение едн-  
пыше и свободные выборы и по-настоящему потребности восстано-  
вить равный кооперации Култного строя.

Компартия считает, говорится в Докладе, что для того, что-  
бы создать правительство, обладающее полной поддержкой наро-  
да, в также для создания основы сотрудничества между различны-  
ми партиями, Женевративческие кругами и отделившись демократи-  
чески настроенными лицами, необходимо провозгласить в явном следую-  
щую, более широкую программу:

1. Аннулирование соглашения коммюнистического Култного строя и  
создание народно-демократического правительства.

2. Радикализация мысли народа демократии для народа. Ос-  
вобождать всех политзаключенных. Аннулирование закон о военном  
поземелье и огуле, в также все антинародные законы и интриги-  
ровать право забастовок.

3. Позволять конститутивное ведение инсинуир подвух.  
Тоталитаризм отомыкнн со всеми органами и народами, которые на-  
тудт чуждого дугды как к национальному народу, так и к самим



12.

работнику плату, а повыши зарплату. Установить 40-часовую рабочую неделю, включая в нее время, необходимое для принятия пищи и для отдыха. Ввести строгий запрет массовых увольнений.

9. Установить высокие налоги на крупные промышленные предприятия. Отменить налоги с мелкой торговли и уменьшить как прямые, так и косвенные налоги с населения.

10. Проводить справедливую политику цен на продукты питания. Гарантировать предоставление жилья народу. Национализировать частные большие дома, являющиеся роскошью, с целью предоставления жилья народу.

11. Ввести обязательное бесплатное обучение, включая среднее.

12. Продолжать радикальные меры против помещиков, элементов и угнетателей, экспроприировать и национализировать незаконно нажитую ими собственность. Привлечь всех эксплуататоров и преданных элементов к суду.

В докладе отмечается, что все 12 пунктов этой программы основаны на национальной программе, которая была одобрена и принята руководящими центрами 20 партий и народных организаций 14 июля 1948 г. в Джокьякарте.

To Comrade E.H. Aidi

I have received your letter of January 15, 1953. I did not intend to reply to you, as I thought that it was possible to put this off until our next meeting. But later I learnt that your comrades were expecting an answer. Therefore I have decided to reply without waiting until we meet.

1. The Peasant Question. It is a welcome fact that there are no longer any disagreements between us on the peasant question. But I think that there should not only be no disagreements between us, but no misunderstandings at all on this question. I have in mind one passage in your letter, which says: "we will make the work among the peasants, that is, the abolishment of feudalism as our main work." This sentence may give rise to misunderstanding, since people may think that in Indonesia there exists full, 100 per cent, feudalism; which, of course, is incorrect. During our talk, I already said that there is not, and cannot be, 100 per cent feudalism in Indonesia. Just as there was not in Russia before the October Revolution in 1917, just as there was not in China or other People's Democracies before the beginning of the anti-feudal revolution.

It may be asked, to what extent did feudalism actually exist then in those countries and what exists now in Indonesia? There was, of course, not 100 per cent feudalism there, but there were important and onerous survivals of feudalism. The Russian Communists spoke of the survivals of feudalism when they roused the peasants against the landlords in 1917. The survivals of feudalism were also mentioned during the carrying out of the "agrarian reform". I think that the same thing is taking

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place in Indonesia. Therefore, in drafting the programs, the formula about the abolition of feudalism should be replaced by the formula about the abolition of the survivals of feudalism, as being more exact.

Of course, in some articles and letters the formula of the abolition of feudalism is sometimes used and this does not always arouse objection. Then, however, it is a question of drafting a program, it is necessary to be quite exact and precisely for this reason preference should be given to the formula about the abolition of the survivals of feudalism.

The question arises: what are these survivals of feudalism, what is their essence?

They are, in the first place, the actually existing right of the big landowners to monopoly possession of the land cultivated by the peasants, the majority of the peasants being unable—in view of their poverty—to own land and therefore being compelled to rent land from the landowners on any terms ("monopoly right" of the landowners to the land under feudalism).

They are, in the second place, payment to the landlords of rent in kind, which constitutes a considerable proportion of the peasant harvest and which leads to the impoverishment of the majority of the peasants ("abolition of surplus in kind" under feudalism).

They are, in the third place, the system of rent in the form of labour on the landlords' estates, carried out with the aid of primitive peasant equipment, which puts the majority of the peasants in the position of serfs ("serfs" under feudalism).

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They are, finally, a dense network of debts, ensnaring the majority of the peasants, making them insolvent debtors and putting them in the position of slaves in relation to the landowners ("debt slavery" under feudalism).

The consequences of all these survivals of feudalism are well-known: technical backwardness of agriculture, impoverishment of the majority of the peasants, contraction of the internal market, impossibility of industrializing the country.

Hence, the immediate task of the Communists is to eliminate the survivals of feudalism, to develop the anti-feudal agrarian revolution, to transfer without compensation the landowners' land to the peasants as their private property.

The question arises: does not temporarily renouncing the nationalization of the land and the division of the landowners' lands among the peasants as their private property mean renouncing socialist prospects in the development of agriculture? No, it does not.

In Russia it was possible and necessary to proceed to the nationalization of the land by a direct route and not through the division of the landowners' lands, since favourable conditions for this existed there, viz: a) the principle of private property in land did not obtain due popularity and was even undermined among the majority of the peasants owing to the presence in Russia of the peasant commune with its periodical re-divisions of land; b) the peasants themselves, the majority of them, considered that "the land belongs to no one, the land belongs to God, but the fruits of the earth should belong to those who labour on the land"; c) the strongest workers' party in the

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country, the Bolshevik Leninist Party, which enjoyed confidence among the peasants, stood for nationalization, conducted propaganda for nationalization of the land; 4) the strongest peasant party in the country, the Socialist-Revolutionary Party, in spite of its petty-bourgeois and dual nature, also stood for nationalization, and conducted propaganda for nationalization of the land. All this created a favourable situation for carrying out nationalization of the land in Russia.

The situation was different in the People's Democracies. These favourable conditions not only did not exist there, but, on the contrary, the principle of private property in land became so rooted in the life of the peasants that they did not conceive of the agrarian revolution in any other form than that of the division of the landowners' estates into private property. As regards the slogan of nationalization of the land, the peasants' attitude to it was one either of indifference or of great distrust, because they believed that nationalization of the land means an attempt to take away from the peasant owners the land that they owned. Consequently, it was necessary in those countries to proceed to the nationalization of the land and to socialist prospects in the development of agriculture, not directly but in a round-about way—through the division of the landowners' lands.

Seven or eight years have passed since the agrarian revolution in the People's Democracies of Europe. What did the division of the landowners' lands lead to there in this period, what results did it produce? It should be noted first of all that the agrarian revolution did not put a stop to the differentiation of the peasantry there, but, on the contrary, has

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intensified it recently, by dividing the peasantry into three groups: the poor peasants (the majority), middle peasants (25-30 per cent), kulaks (5-10 per cent). Further, the poor peasants became convinced that the land alone, which they received as a result of the agrarian revolution, was insufficient for any considerable improvement of their material position, that for this they needed also livestock and equipment, sufficient quantities of seeds and agricultural machinery. The peasants, however, experienced a great lack of all these things. Hence the working peasants came to the conclusion that it was necessary to combine the small land holdings of the peasants and their equipment in a single large-scale co-operative farm on a large area of land and to require the assistance of the state in the form of tractors, combines and other agricultural machinery. In other words, the working peasants in those countries took the path of collective farms, the path of socialist development.

As regards nationalization of the land it is being prepared and beginning to be carried out in those countries in a rather peculiar way, namely, by promulgating a series of separate laws restricting the right to private ownership of land and making difficult or even altogether prohibiting the sale and purchase of land. This is the path towards nationalization of the land.

Such are the results of the agrarian revolution and the division of the landowners' lands in the People's Democracies of Europe.

It is this path that China is taking too.

I think that the same thing will happen in Indonesia after the victory of the agrarian revolution there.

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2. The National Front. Of course, if the Communist Party is so weak that it is incapable of simultaneously taking up both the organization of an alliance of the workers and peasants and of the creation of a national front then it will have to choose between these two social undertakings and concentrate its forces on the organization of an alliance of the workers and peasants as the more important task. But such a contingency cannot be considered in any way desirable. It would be desirable, on the contrary, for the Party to gain the possibility of building simultaneously both the alliance of the workers and peasants and the National Front. In this connection it should be borne in mind that the National Front is certainly essential and important for a successful struggle not only against the internal reaction but also against the foreign reaction.

Hence my advice is: in organizing the alliance of the workers and peasants on the basis of a revolutionary agrarian program you should take up at the same time the improvement and strengthening of the united National Front so that the Communist Party will acquire in time a leading position within this front.

3. For the rest, your letter does not call for any comment.

With Communist greetings,

J. Stalin

February 2, 1955.

*Handwritten signature*  
16.2.55